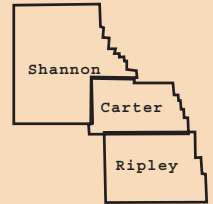




Conservation Currents



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

PROJECTS, ISSUES AND PROGRAMS IN SHANNON, CARTER AND RIPLEY COUNTIES

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

2006 DEER SEASON

TROUT HABITAT
IMPROVEMENTSMINATURE DINOSAURS
OF THE OZARKSSO YOU WANT TO BE
A FORESTER?

KIDS NEED NATURE

BASIC SUCKER
CLEANING

Current Conversations

Squirrel Hunting: Like Running Across An Old Friend

Larry Rieken
Wildlife Regional Supervisor

Recently, I was visiting with several of my old hunting buddies about how we had started hunting. Each of us had started out by hunting squirrels. Once the subject was opened, each person had to share their favorite story about their early squirrel hunting adventures. By the expressions, those fond memories were recalled as if they had happened yesterday.

Today, many things have changed around us. Everything seems to move at a much faster pace. We do not rely on hunting as much for food anymore, but more for recreation. There are a hundred reasons not to go hunting. With all of the competing recreational opportunities, it is no wonder that many traditional activities, such as hunting, are decreasing. We must work to change this.

The nice thing about squirrel hunting is that it offers a long season, from the fourth Saturday in May to January 15. There is no pressure to focus on a short, intense season, such as deer rifle season. This enables the squirrel hunter to pick ideal conditions.

For many squirrel hunters, the preferred hunting time is late May or early June and the preferred location is beside by a mulberry tree. Other hunters favor squirrel hunting when the squirrels begin to cut hickory nuts in late summer. My youngest boy falls into this group. He views poison ivy, tick, chigger and mosquito bite the same as sunburn—just another sign that it is summer. How-

ever, he may be the exception on this subject. There is nothing that will lead a young hunter to question their confidence in their hunting mentor like getting covered with seed ticks. Thank goodness for insect repellants and frost.

For others, including me and my other children, the favored squirrel hunting time is after deer rifle season. This is a very peaceful time to be in the woods. Ticks and chiggers are long gone and the weather can be perfect. Areas to focus hunting efforts on this time of year are south and west slopes that are dominated by large post oaks. South and west slopes get more sun exposure so the snow off of these slopes first and old post oaks have numerous cavities that squirrels love



No matter the season that you hunt, you can usually count on squirrels to be numerous. Squirrels average 2-4 young per litter and 2 litters per year. This enables the squirrel population to withstand significant pressure. When we have

record mast crops, like last year, squirrel numbers sore. For younger hunters this is very important. Deer and turkey population numbers are very good today but a hunter can still sit for long time and not see any. This is tough on young hunters. Squirrel hunting tends to be fast pace.

Squirrel meat makes for excellent table fare. Chuck Wichern's favorite squirrel recipe is reprinted in the inside of the back cover. Personally, I like anything that is fried and sometimes I de-bone the meat for ease of eating.

A recent tip that I learned is to soak the whole squirrel in water before skinning. This really cuts down on the amount of hair that gets on the meat.

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Squirrel hunting helps young hunters develop their outdoor skills, especially spot and stalk. Today I hear stories of young hunters shooting and missing while hunting big game. Practicing with squirrel hunting will eliminate those misses.

The Current River District offers an excellent opportunity to pursue squirrels. A considerable amount of the private land in the District is still

timbered. A map called the Lower Ozarks shows the public land tracts. This map is available at the MDC offices listed on the back page.

Take a child squirrel hunting today and someday they too can reflect on a lifetime of wonderful memories collected from spending time in the outdoors.

Protection

2006 DEER SEASON INFORMATION



Brad Hadley Shannon County Conservation Agent

By the time you read this the 2006 deer season will be just around the corner. When you pick up your permits be sure to ask for a copy of the *2006 Fall Deer and Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information* pamphlet. In it is important information for those of you who will be going afield this fall. The purpose of this article is to give you a quick look at what you will find in the pamphlet.

First, let's look at what is new for 2006. There is good news here in that not a lot has changed over the 2005 seasons. One item of note is the department's continued efforts to provide better management and quality hunts on department areas. Generally, state-wide regulations apply on department-owned Conservation Areas. Restrictions to state-wide regulations in effect on Conservation Areas in the three-county area served by the Current River District Conservation Team are reflected in the table below; all other local Conservation Areas are subject to state-wide regulations.

Also new is that qualifying resident landowners will receive no-cost Antlerless Deer permits (firearms and archery) in accordance with county restrictions. This means that, in Carter County, landowners will not receive any landowner Firearms Antlerless permits but in Ripley and Shannon counties landowners will receive one landowner Firearms Antlerless permit. Landowners in all three counties will receive one Firearms Any-deer permit, and may also purchase and fill state-wide permits according to county restrictions, but may not take more than one antlered deer during the firearms seasons. The results are that Carter County landowners may receive and use a no-cost Any-deer permit and may purchase and use a state-wide Any-deer permit, but can only harvest one antlered buck and one antlerless deer. Ripley and Shannon county landowners may receive and use a no-cost Any-deer permit and a

no-cost Landowner Antlerless deer permit. They may also purchase and use a state-wide Any-deer permit and a state-wide Antlerless deer permit but are restricted to harvesting only one antlered buck on either of the two Any-deer permits held.

The last item that is new for 2006 concerns the Antlerless Portion of the Firearms Deer season. Wright County is the only county in the Ozark Region that has in the past been open during this season. Wright County is no longer open during the Antlerless Portion but an unlimited number of Antlerless Only permits may be filled there during the November and Muzzleloader portions of the Firearms Deer season.

We hope you have safe and enjoyable hunts during all of the 2006 fall seasons and invite you to call local department personnel anytime you need clarification on regulations.



"Carter County, landowners will not receive any landowner Firearms Antlerless permits."



"Ripley and Shannon counties landowners will receive one landowner Firearms Antlerless permit."

Area Name	County	Restriction
Carter Creek	Carter	No archery antlerless or firearms antlerless permits may be used
Peck Ranch - outside fenced portion	Carter, Shannon	No archery antlerless or firearms antlerless permits may be used
Fourche Creek - Compartment 7	Ripley	Archery methods only
Fourche Creek - excluding Compartment 7	Ripley	Antlered only during firearms season; no archery antlerless permits may be used
Hemenway	Ripley	Archery methods only
Sand Ponds	Ripley	Archery methods only

Fisheries

BARREN FORK TROUT GET NEW HOMES



Dave Mayers Fisheries Management Biologist

The wild rainbow trout population of Barren Fork Creek, located in northern Shannon County, recently got a

shot in the arm with the addition of some instream habitat. Missouri Department of Conservation crews spent a day and a half installing wooden structures, called skyhooks, to create overhead bank cover.

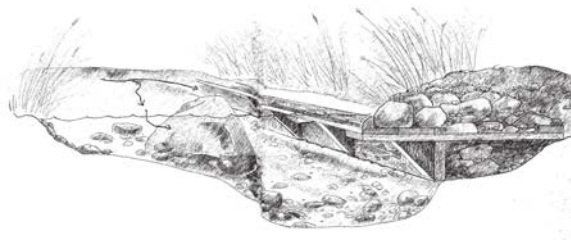
This small, clear, spring-fed stream is very shallow with extensive amounts of small gravel, and in the summer months, beds of watercress vegetation. This type of habitat is excellent for young-of-the-year and one year old trout, but not the best for older adults. The skyhook structures are designed to improve the habitat of adult sized trout that is lacking in Barren Fork.

Skyhooks, and their close cousin, lunker structures, are assembled out of rough cut green oak on the stream site, and then set into the bank. Large rock is used to armor the structures and keep the bank stable. They create about a 22"

overhang that is submerged just below the water line. When placed at the tail of a riffle they provide a secure lair for trout near the riffle food source.

This is the third set of habitat improvement structure we have placed in Barren Fork. Two sets of lunker structures were installed in 2002 and 2003 and are functioning well. We wanted to try skyhooks because they are easier to build and are less intrusive to install into the bank.

Placement of any habitat improvement structures is critical. Sites have to be carefully selected so that they can work with the streams natural flow, both normal and flood levels, to assure structures remain stable and work to enhance trout habitat. Barren Fork is the first stream in Missouri where we are using these structures. After a few high water events we hope to learn more about ways to improve trout habitat in Ozark streams.



"Barren Fork is the first stream in Missouri where we are using these structures."



"Skyhook structures are designed to improve the habitat of adult sized trout that is lacking in Barren Fork."

Sucker Cleaning Basics



Scrape the scales from the dead fish using a spoon, dull knife or scraping tool.



Use a sharp fillet knife or electric knife to cut away the fillet, don't worry about removing rib bones until next step.



Lay the fillets skin side down to cut the ribs away from the rest of the fillet.



"Score" the meat by making slices in the flesh 1/4 inch apart, being careful not to cut through its skin.



Yellow Sucker



Hog Sucker

Wildlife COLLARED LIZARDS: MINIATURE DINOSAURS MAKE A BIG COME BACK



Rhonda Rimer
Natural History Biologist

Collared lizards are distant relatives to iguanas and other lizards that live throughout much of the United States, Mexico and Central America. Their name comes from two dark bars, which look like a collar. Missouri is at the eastern edge of the eastern collared lizard's range, which includes much of the southwestern United States and most of northern Mexico. The stronghold for collared lizards in Missouri is the Ozarks. This is because the glade habitat the lizards need i.e. dry, open and rocky hilltops and south- or southwest-facing hillsides, is common in the Ozarks. Ozark glades are home to a variety of other near-desert plants and animals, including prickly pear cactus, scorpions, and tarantulas.

While glade habitat is still common in the Ozarks, it is far less abundant than in historical times. A combination of inventories and research has revealed that many glades in the Missouri Ozarks have nearly disappeared, along with their unique plants and animals. In the past 20 years, Missouri Department of Conservation land managers have been working to restore these unique habitats.

A large part of glade habitat restoration involves the use of prescribe fire. Glades are similar to prairie communities in that they must have periodic fire to keep them from being overtaken by trees. Before European settlement of the Ozarks, glades were burned every few years by lightning

or fires set by Native Americans. Without these fires, bushes and trees—especially red cedar—take over glades. Periodic, controlled fire, along with the cutting of cedars and other woody vegetation, has made a dramatic difference. Glades have been restored to habitat that is open and thinly covered by grasses and wildflowers and has plenty of exposed rock for shelter, display, and basking—just what collared lizards need. The open glades and associated plants supply loads of insects—an important food for collared lizards.

Collared lizard populations are now at an all time high. Without the work of land managers to restore the habitat of this creature, the lizards might have disappeared from the Ozarks. Now this harmless, colorful and fascinating glade-dwelling reptile will be a part of Missouri's Ozarks for a long time to come.



"The open glades and associated plants supply loads of insects—an important food for collared lizards."



Rocky Creek Field Day

Who: Missouri Department of Conservation, Missouri Wild Turkey Federation
What: Rocky Creek Conservation Area Field Day
Where: Three Miles north and east of Winona on road 313.
When: **October 21, 2006 9AM to 4PM**
Why: Opportunity for landowners to learn about forest and wildlife management on private and state land.

Watch for local notices in newspapers and radio in October.

To learn more please contact:

Gary Gognat,
Resource Forester
Eminence, Missouri.
573-226-3616 extension 25.

*See Map On
Opposite Page*

Forestry

FORESTER ANYONE?

Clint Dalbom
Forest District
Supervisor

Natural resource managers in the Ozarks are each involved in their particular field for a variety of reasons. The

amazing thing is that all of the reasons are similar. Money is nice, but not a driving force. There are many other fields that a person could pursue to make more money. But there is a measure of satisfaction you feel when you are making a lasting impact on the landscape and doing what is right - restoring natural communities by making decisions that will affect the future - that can't be measured.

The Ozarks is a very beautiful place to work and live. The web of life here is full of diversity with many unique plant and animal communities. The hills and forest offer great scenery. But, as with anything, the more that people use this part of the world for recreation, homes, etc. the more the opportunities that exist for positive and, sadly, negative impacts.

We have a lot of natural resources here in the Ozarks, but one of the greatest resources is the people who live here. One long-time area resi-

dent who came from a family with deep roots in this land stated, "my family has managed this land for 150 years. I think we have done a good job, don't you?" My answer was, "Yes, I think you have." Our streams are still clear, the ridges are covered with forest, and our air quality is among the best in the country.

Do you have an interest in becoming a Forester, Wildlife Biologist, Conservation Agent, or Fisheries Biologist? If you do, my advice is to follow your dreams. We, as an agency, don't get very many Foresters from the Ozarks. Currently there is a demand for educated Foresters in this area. A professional Forester requires a four year degree, preferably in Forestry, from an accredited college or university. The ideal situation for a new Forester with the Missouri Department of Conservation is to start out as a Resource Forester Assistant. This is a term training position that is designed to introduce the new employee to all the aspects of the Resource Forester position while under the guidance of an experienced supervisor. The term is normally 3 years and involves some pretty intensive training and field work. The next step is a Resource Forester position. This is a position with a wide range of responsibility including working with private landowners, managing Missouri Department of Conservation areas, and supervising a work team made up of three to five employees that assist with the management of these areas. The other divisions in the Missouri Department of Conservation have similar systems in place for training new resource managers.

Remember, as a Missouri citizen, this is your Missouri Department of Conservation. If you would like to be a part of it, get some advice when furthering your education. Call one of our Regional Offices and talk to someone representing the field that you are the most interested or call me at the Eminence Office at 573-226-3616, extension 23.

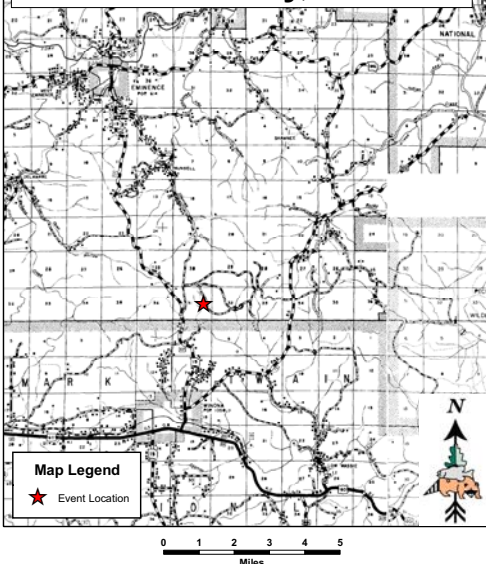


"...one of the greatest resources is the people who live here."



"Currently there is a demand for educated Foresters in this area."

Rocky Creek CA Field Day
October 21, 2006
9am - 4pm
Shannon County, Missouri



Education

WHY KIDS NEED NATURE



Bridgett Jackson
Conservation Education Consultant



Whether you grew up in the country or the big city, chances are you spent a lot of time happily playing outdoors, exploring and getting dirty. Maybe you climbed trees in the neighborhood, helped grow a veggie patch, or spent summer nights catching fireflies. Unfortunately, many of today's young children are missing out on these direct experiences with their natural world, and according to experts, this is causing ill effects in both their minds and bodies. In rural, urban, and suburban settings, over-packed schedules, fear of the outdoors and the lure of computers and televisions steer children into spending more time indoors. Luckily, when adults purposefully and enthusiastically set out to engage children in nature, a bridge can be built to help connect today's young children with their environment.



When you step outside into nature all of your senses are activated. You are seeing, hearing, smelling, feeling, even tasting. Alas, the opposite is also true-when you are not immersed in your natural world, your senses are dulled and lose their sharpness. Research shows that meaningful exposure to nature can be very therapeutic for families, helping with depression, obesity, and attention-deficit disorder. Exposure to nature has been shown to reduce stress and increase attention span. Getting outdoors can refresh and rejuvenate a child's brain, helping them to focus and pay attention when in a more structured setting.

It doesn't take a great deal of planning to begin the process of exposing children to what's outside in their surroundings. This can mean visiting a local park, a farm, a patch of forest, or your own backyard. It's not necessarily about the kind of nature, it's about letting children have the opportunity and freedom to explore their environment. These experiences help children develop important skills they can use throughout their lives, such as asking meaningful questions, making careful observations, finding ways to test their ideas, and sharing their thoughts and observations with others.

What can adults do to help foster a lifetime of learning and caring for nature in our children? First and foremost, lead by example. Be enthusiastic about nature yourself and model respect for the environment. Be sure to get down on your child's level and see what they see and show interest and excitement in what interests them. Listen to your child and let them express their thoughts without jumping in with answers or ideas and keep your schedule flexible enough to allow time for creativity and curiosity. Autumn is a great time of year for taking a walk through your neighborhood and observing the seasonal changes and beautiful leaves or you could spend some time watching the squirrels busily gathering nuts to help them survive the winter. Maybe you could be lucky enough to take a trip to one of our wetland areas to view birds that may be migrating through the area or you may just choose to lay on your back in the shade and watch the clouds. Whatever activity you choose, enjoy the time together and be assured that you are making a fun, exciting, and healthful choice for your family.

Quail Facts

Whistle Count Procedures

To provide a measurement of quail production just prior to hunting season, listen for covey calls during the last 3 weeks of October. Begin listening 45 minutes before sunrise. Continue until birds whistle or sunrise if you hear no whistling. Fall coveys usually whistle about 25 minutes before sunrise and for less than 30 seconds. Listen only on clear mornings when the wind is less than 5 mph. Under most circumstances you should be able to hear all coveys within 500 yards of your listening point. Permanently mark your listening stations and write down the number of coveys you hear in a journal. This will allow you to monitor your population trends from year to year and see if your quail management practices are working.

Did You Know???

One of the native foods most commonly used by bobwhite quail in Missouri is the common ragweed-the bane of allergy sufferers. It also has a vegetative structure that makes it attractive for brood-rearing and roosting. It can be encouraged by fall and winter disturbance of the vegetation and soil surface. Such activities as prescribed burning, light disking, grazing, and herbicide application will result in a flush of ragweed from the natural seedbank in the soil. Even idled food plots can produce a flush of ragweed the first year. Spring disturbances will not encourage ragweed.

Continued on page 7

Number of seeds needed per day to meet the energy needs of a quail.

Temperature	70 F	32 F	0 F	0 F
Activity Level	Low	Low	Low	High
Corn	41	49	69	94
Soybean	103	122	174	236
Milo	666	788	1,121	1,520
Sunflower	1,165	1,379	1,961	2,660
Black locust	1,250	1,479	2,104	2,854
Partridge pea	3,601	4,261	6,062	8,223
Common ragweed	3,870	4,580	6,515	8,837
Smooth sumac	6,125	7,248	10,310	13,985
German millet	8,418	9,962	14,171	19,222
Korean lespedeza	9,480	11,218	15,959	21,647
Switchgrass	27,524	32,570	46,331	62,846



Jacks Fork and Plate

Fall-Off-The-Bone_Squirrel

Chuck Wichern, MDC Fisheries Technician
West Plains

3 squirrels, quartered into pieces
lemon pepper seasoning
flour
white onion
water
vegetable oil

*Dredge meat in flour, and deep fry in oil, only until golden brown (this will prepare the squirrel for baking)

*Remove squirrel from oil, and place on paper towels to drain.

*In a 10" x 12" baking pan, disposable aluminum pan makes for easy cleanup, place a wire rack or crinkled foil in bottom of pan to elevate squirrel.

*Place fried squirrel in pan, add 1 ¹/₂ cups of water.

*Cover squirrel with one thickly sliced onion.

*Sprinkle with lemon pepper seasoning.

*Cover pan with heavy duty aluminum foil and crimp edges to seal in moisture.

*Place in 350 degree oven until tender. About 2 - 2¹/₂ hours depending on age of squirrel.

*Check occasionally and add water if necessary to maintain steaming.

*Tenderness of squirrel is essential for good flavor.

*Enjoy the most tender and tasty squirrel ever.



Outdoor Calendar

Hunting

	Opens	Closes
Groundhog	5/15/06	12/15/06
Coyote	5/15/06	3/15/07
Squirrel	5/27/06	2/15/07
Rabbit	10/01/06	2/15/07
Turkey Archery	9/15/06 11/22/06	11/10/06 1/15/07
Turkey Fall Firearms	10/1/06	10/31/06
Deer		
Archery	9/15/06 11/22/06	11/10/06 1/15/07
Urban Counties (antlerless only)	10/6/06	10/9/06
Youth	10/28/06	10/29/06
November	11/11/06	11/21/06
Muzzleloader	11/24/06	12/3/06
Antlerless	12/9/06	12/17/06

Fishing

	Opens	Closes
Black Bass (impoundments)	Open All Year	----
Black Bass (streams, Current Jacks Fork and their tributaries)	5/27/06	2/28/07
Trout Management Areas	Open All Year	----
Trout Parks	3/1/06	10/31/06
Gigging Nongame Fish (streams)	9/15/06	1/31/07
Bullfrog	6/30/06	10/31/06

Resident Hunting Permit

Prices

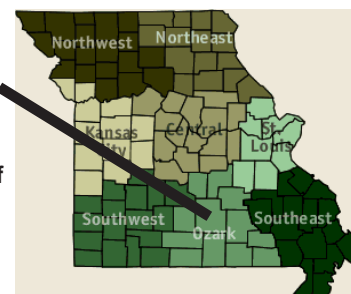
Hunting and Fishing --- \$19
Small Game --- \$10
Youth Deer and Turkey ---\$17
Archery Hunting ---\$19
Firearms Any Deer ---\$17
Firearms First Bonus Deer --- \$7
Firearms Second Bonus Deer --- \$7
Fall Firearms Turkey ---\$13
Spring Turkey --- \$17
Trapping --- \$10

Resident Fishing Permit Prices

Hunting and Fishing --- \$19
Fishing --- \$12
Trout --- \$7



We are on the web. To view this newsletter go to www.mdc.mo.gov and click on the Ozark portion of the map located at the bottom of web page.



We're on the Web!

WWW.CONSERVATION.STATE.MO.US



MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

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Fax: 417/256-0429

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Jefferson City, MO
65109
Phone: 573/751-4115

MDC Mission

- ö To protect and manage the fish, forest, and wildlife resources of the state,
- ö To serve the public and facilitate their participation in resource management activities,
- ö To provide opportunity for all citizens to use, enjoy, and learn about fish, forest, and wildlife resources.

Mission of This Newsletter

The mission of this newsletter is to share current information about conservation projects, issues, and programs and to develop working relationships with the citizens of Shannon, Carter, and Ripley Counties.

Share Your Thoughts

If there are any subjects you would like to see in the *Conservation Currents* please contact any of the employees listed below, or if you have any questions pertaining to the Wildlife Code please contact the Conservation Agent assigned to your county. County assignments and phone numbers are listed below.

Operation Game Thief and Operation Forest Arson

Sponsored by the Conservation Federation of Missouri, the Missouri Dept. of Conservation and the U.S. Forest Service

Phone: 1-800-392-1111

CONTACT OFFICES AND NAMES

If you have a question about any of the following topics, here are your contact professionals:

Shannon Co. Field Office
Eminence 573/226-3616



Forestry

Gary Gognat 573/226-3616
Terry Thompson 573/226-3616
Mike Bill 573/226-3616

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Conservation Agents:

Brad Hadley 573/292-8540
Scott Stephens 573/226-3089

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Kim Houf 573/323-4249
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